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Jottings from June: May 15, 2016

Pentecost was on Sunday, May 15. Some call Pentecost the birthday of the church. Some churches celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit with special worship and children's church activities. Some churches encourage people to wear red. Some churches celebrate their anniversaries on Pentecost or take the annual congregational picture on that day.

It is good to set aside a day to reflect on how the Holy Spirit came upon believers from many places and of many tongues and races. That is a fitting metaphor for the diversity of the ulture we find in the Southeast Conference. And it is a fitting time to think about how our congregations and communities are being revived. Do we feel the rushing wind or see the spark of new energy and new ideas in our congregations? Do the people in our communities stop to wonder at the words we are speaking in the public square and ask how we came to speak their language?

In this season as we listen to all the rhetoric in the political arena and watch people divide along ideological lines, how do we speak the language of love and freedom from bondage and inclusion of all in our own houses of worship? How can we be a healing balm in this season of contentious debate and deeply wounding words and the lack of respect for others' viewpoints and realities? How do we speak truth to power in our communities, counties, states, and in our nation as we go to the polling place?

The ministry of Jesus and of the gospel that we seek to live out was not contained in a single building but happened on the road, among the people, reaching out to those who were regarded as less than equal or even untouchable. How closely are we following Jesus or are we just preaching to the choir and living with the same old, same old and calling it good. We are challenged in scripture to reach out, travel outside our comfort zones, and encounter the other so that we might grow into the likeness of Christ and be faithful disciples as well as agents of God's unfailing love, mercy, and compassion.

Breathe on us, breath of God. Fill us with life anew.

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Caring Community: May 15, 2016

LaCretia Bellamy Ordained at Rehoboth Fellowship on May 8

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